

## The Philippines: Political Developments

President Aquino's US trip has recharged her political mandate, but her second honeymoon may be brief because the military is forcing her to deal quickly with the contentious issue of a counterinsurgency strategy.

*Aquino thrilled*

- The US Embassy reports that Aquino and her aides are thrilled with what they consider the trip's unqualified success. The Manila press has praised Aquino's performance in the US, and even opposition leaders on the right admit that her legitimacy and popularity have been boosted at their expense.

*Press praise*

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- In Aquino's absence, however, Defense Minister Enrile continued his public criticism of the government's pursuit of ceasefire talks with Communist insurgents. Enrile was joined by Armed Forces Chief of Staff Ramos and Vice President Laurel--neither of whom had been as outspoken as Enrile--in calling for a review of the military's defensive posture.

*Enrile  
Ramos  
Laurel*

- Aquino had been moving toward a harder line against the Communists even before her US trip, but she may still be hesitant to unleash the military so as to avoid the appearance of giving in to Enrile or bowing to US pressure. She probably hopes that the Communists' offer this weekend of a 30-day ceasefire will vindicate her strategy of pursuing a peaceful resolution to the insurgency. Even if the ceasefire talks break down, the military is largely unprepared and ill-equipped to conduct sustained operations.

*Communists offer 30-day c-f. (press only)*

*N't Front Demo.*

Aquino is extremely unhappy with the Constitutional Commission's approval of provisions placing restrictions on foreign military bases and nuclear weapons in the Philippines, and she may decide to dismiss Executive Secretary Arroyo for allowing the provisions to pass in her absence. Aquino wants at least to remove the antinuclear provision, but any attempt to effect changes at this stage may backfire.

*Constitutional Commission*

- According to the Embassy, Aquino was embarrassed by the Commission's votes during her US trip and sees them as a threat to the cordial relations she established during her visit to Washington. Before she left the US, she instructed Arroyo and his assistants to lobby Commission members for a suspension of the procedural rules that would allow reconsideration of the nuclear weapons ban before it passed the final vote.

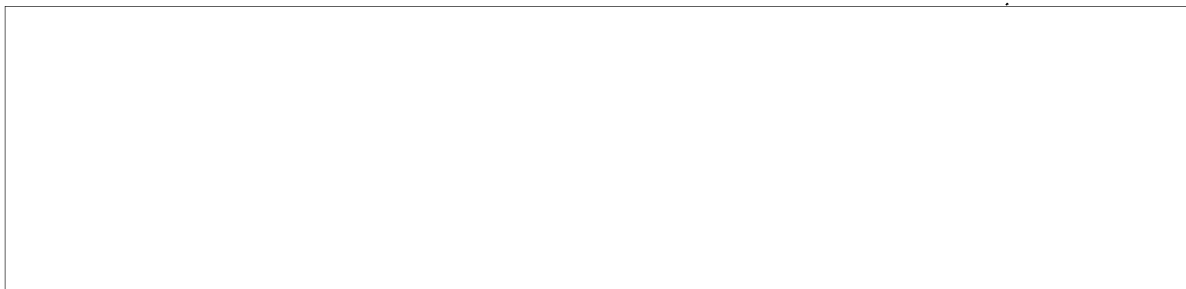
*Nuclear embarrassment*

- Arroyo and Deputy Executive Secretary Factoran, however, have made little or no contact with Aquino's supporters in the Commission. In addition, most of the moderates on the Commission believe that the bases and nuclear provisions that passed are the best compromises possible with leftist delegates--who have threatened to campaign against ratification of the constitution later this year if their demands are not met.

*Fire Ex. Sec. Arroyo*

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## The Philippines: Constitutional Provisions

Following is the text of provisions dealing with foreign military bases and nuclear weapons as approved by the Philippine Constitutional Commission. Both provisions await final approval of the respective articles which contain them in the draft constitution.

From the Article on Transitory Provisions:

"After the expiration of the RP [Republic of the Philippines] ~~US bases~~ agreement in 1991, foreign military bases, troops, or facilities shall not be allowed in the Philippines' territory except under the terms of a treaty duly concurred in by the Senate, and when the Congress so requires, ratified by a majority of the votes cast by the people in a referendum held for that purpose and recognized as a treaty by the other concurring state."

From the Article on Declaration of Principles:

"The Philippines, consistent with the national interest, adopts and pursues a policy of freedom from nuclear weapons in its territory."

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